

Betsy 2

MARY HARTMAN

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EPISODE #188

by

Jerry Adelman

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

MARY	LOUISE LASSER
TOM	GREG MULLAVEY
LORETTA	MARY KAY PLACE
MARTHA	DODY GOODMAN
PAT GIMBLE	SUSAN BROWNING
GARTH GIMBLE	MARTIN MULL
DR. GILROY	TOM TROUPE
BARTENDER	ROBERT STONEMAN
PAT'S MOTHER	

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ACT ONE

GIMBLE LIVING ROOM - NEXT MORNING

PAT, A TURBAN ON HER HEAD --
HIDING A BRUISE, AS WE WILL
LATER DISCOVER -- IS TRYING TO
SCRUB THE WINE STAINS OFF THE
WALL. MOMENT.

SFX: PHONE RINGS

PAT

(TO PHONE) Hello.

FOLLOWING IS A TWO-WAY WITH PAT'S
MOTHER ON LIMBO PHONE IN A
LIVING ROOM.

MOTHER

(NEVER LOVING) Patricia?

PAT

Mother?

MOTHER

You sound awful. What's the matter?

PAT

No, I'm fine. How are you?

MOTHER

Well, actually I couldn't be better.

I got the most beautiful present from
your sister this morning. From Rome.

PAT

Oh, are they in Rome? I thought they went to Paris.

MOTHER

Well, first they went to Paris, but then they decided to extend the vacation and spend a little time in Rome. Richard is so impulsive -- and doing so well -- they're at the very best hotels. The Ritz, the Hassler...

PAT

What's the present? What did Kay send you?

MOTHER

Oh, just some extravagantly lovely cloisonne pieces. Either seventeenth or eighteenth century. They cost a fortune, you know -- either century.

PAT

Mother, that's wonderful.

MOTHER

Well. Kay always was so thoughtful. Incidentally, she says they're having a fabulous time and making lots of friends. Which doesn't surprise me, of course.

(MORE)

MOTHER (CONT'D)

People take so easily to Kay and Richard.

I don't know where she gets that wonderful knack for making friends. It certainly doesn't run in the family.

Have you heard from her?

PAT

Well, no, she hasn't written.

MOTHER

I wish you two were closer. I really do. It's certainly not Kay's fault, you know. (SHE SIGHS LOUDLY) Oh, well, I gave up on that years ago. So, is there anything new with you?

PAT

Everything's just fine, Mother. We're all settled in our new house.

MOTHER

A tract, isn't it? What's it like?

PAT

Well, it's very nice. We have two bedrooms plus a den.

MOTHER

Is there any land?

PAT

Well, there's a little back yard and a lawn in front.

MOTHER

Oh, speaking of lawns, did I tell you
about the lawn party Kay had before they
left?

PAT

No...

MOTHER

Well, it was just sensational. You know
all that landscaping Richard had done.

PAT

Yes...

MOTHER

Well, everything was in bloom. It was
gorgeous. There must have been two
hundred guests. Plus a small orchestra.
And the catering was perfection!

PAT

That's nice, Mother. Very nice.

MOTHER

How's Garth? Is he still doing publicity
for that politician -- what's his name?
Peters?

PAT

Jeeter. No, actually he's not, Mother.

MOTHER

Oh? Why not? Something better?

PAT

No, they had a disagreement.

MOTHER

I see. Well, I can't say I'm astonished.
Somehow most of Garth's plans never seem
to materialize, do they?

PAT

He'll find something else.

MOTHER

Let us pray.

PAT

Meanwhile, we're very happy.

MOTHER

Oh? You certainly don't sound like it.
You sound awful, Patricia.

PAT

And now that we have Little Garth home
from school --

MOTHER

Oh, by the way, did I tell you Kay's
oldest was elected president of his
senior class? Of course, we all
knew he would be.

PAT

How wonderful.

MOTHER

Yes. A brighter boy doesn't exist.
He's just like his father. Well,
this call is costing me a fortune.
I'd better ring off. Bye, bye, darling.

PAT

Goodbye, Mother. I'm glad you called.

It was very nice talking to you. (IT
WASN'T. IT WAS VERY DEPRESSING)

PAT HANGS UP. CAMERA STAYS WITH
HER. SHE RESUMES HER DREARY TASK
OF TRYING TO WASH THE WINE
STAINS OFF THE WALL. IT'S SLOW,
DREARY WORK. AS SHE REACHES
DOWN TO DIP WASHING CLOTH INTO
BUCKET OF WATER, TWO THINGS
HAPPEN: HER TURBAN SLIPS OFF,
REVEALING THE ANGRY BRUISE; AND,
MARY COMES IN.

MARY

Good morning, Pat. I...

ALTHOUGH PAT IS TRYING FRANTICALLY TO REPLACE THE BRUISE-HIDING TURBAN, MARY SPOTS IT, AND:

MARY (CONT'D)

What happened to your forehead?

PAT

Oh, just a little home accident.

MARY

(EXAMINING THE BRUISE) In the house?

What happened?

PAT

Well, I was opening the refrigerator to get some eggs for breakfast -- actually it was more like brunch -- Garth slept late this morning and I was going to surprise him with breakfast in bed -- and just as I started looking for the eggs the light went out.

MARY

You mean the one inside the refrigerator
that comes on when you open the door?
When I was little I thought God did that.
Then one day I discovered the little
button. I must have stood there with
the door open for over an hour pushing
that button, letting it go, watching the
light go off and on. I haven't felt the
same about God since.

PAT

Well, when that light went out this
morning, I hit my head so hard I thought
I was about to meet our Maker.

MARY

(NOT BUYING) Pat, you're my friend.

Right?

PAT

Of course, Mary.

MARY

And I'm your friend. Right? Right.
So I hope you'll take it in a friendly
way if I say something that kind of
sounds unfriendly. In fact, very
unfriendly. Actually: insulting.

PAT

All right.

MARY

Pat -- I think what you are telling me
is the biggest crock.

PAT

Mary -- !

MARY

I'm your friend, so that doesn't mean I
think you're lying. I just mean just
because I don't believe you doesn't mean
you're lying. Well, on the other hand,
I guess it does. You're lying. But,
I'm still your friend.

PAT

What lies, Mary? I wouldn't lie --

MARY

Well, not intentionally. But just to
protect someone. Like you lied about
Little Garth to Big Garth... remember?
Now I think you've been lying to me about
all these injuries you get all the time.

PAT

Mary, I'm just accident prone.

MARY

Pat, you don't have to hide it from me.
I won't be shocked. I mean, I'll be
shocked. I'll be shocked, of course.
I mean, who wouldn't be? But I'll
understand. I read that article in
Reader's Digest.

PAT

What article?

MARY

About -- battered wives.

PAT, CAUGHT UP SHORT, LOOKS AT
MARY FOR A MOMENT, THEN TURNS
AWAY.

PAT

I'm not a battered wife!

MARY

Bruises and contusions do not happen from
oiling the leaves on your rubber plant.

PAT

(TURNED AWAY FROM MARY) But, it's not
Garth's fault, Mary. You've got to try
to understand him.

MARY

Then he is a wife-beater.. Not that it's
any of my business. If a person wants
to do crazy things, America is a free
country. So I can understand a person
who wants to be a wife-beater or batterer.
As long as he doesn't do one thing.

PAT

What?

MARY

Batter his wife. I mean, that is
un-American. Of course, according to
Reader's Digest, lots of Americans do
it. But it's still un-American.

PAT

Mary -- Garth was very upset last night. That job he had doing publicity for Merle Jeeter meant a lot to him. He was really counting on it. I'm sure he wouldn't have hit me if he hadn't been so upset.

MARY

But what about all the other times he battered you? He didn't even know Merle Jeeter then.

PAT

He is not a cruel man, Mary. Basically.

MARY

A batterer isn't cruel? What is he? Playful? Pat, you can't let things go on this way. Reader's Digest says you have to do something about it. There are agencies where you can go to get help.

PAT

Oh, Mary, no. I couldn't do that.

MARY

Why not?

PAT

Please, let's just not talk about it any more. I have to go out now, anyway. I have to go to the market.

MARY

Pat, we did our shopping for the week
yesterday.

PAT

But I have to get something to clean that
wall before Garth gets home. It always
upsets him when he sees something that
reminds him that we had a fight.

MARY

Pat, one person getting hit is not a
fight. Two people getting hit is a
fight. One person getting hit is a
beating.

FADE OUT.

ACT TWOSCENE 1

HAGGERS' LIVING ROOM, LATER THAT MORNING

LORETTA, STANDING, IS STARING AT
THE TELEPHONE. MOMENT.

LORETTA

(PLEADING) Just one little ring? Please?

Just one.

SHE CONTINUES TO STARE AT IT.
MOMENT. SHE LOOKS AT HER WATCH,
GIVES UP WAITING FOR THE PHONE
TO RING, MOVES AWAY FROM IT,
COMPOSES HERSELF TO PRAY.

LORETTA

Good morning, Lord. I hope you had a
nice night. Don't even ask me about
mine: I didn't close my pea-green eyes
for one bitty minute from the time I
laid down to the time I tottered out of
that miserable, lonesome bed. I don't
even get to dream about Charlie no more.

Well, I don't guess you want to hear
about my miseries this morning. Lord
knows... I mean you know I've chonked that
tale of woe up at you often enough since
my Baby Boy... that's Charlie...

(MORE)

LORETTA (CONT'D)

... got his mind set on believing I'd be happier without him, on account of he's convinced his dear sweet little old stupid self can't do the bed-type things a loving wife like me has a fierce need of. Anyway, I would of checked in with you earlier this morning, except I been hoping against hope Charlie'd maybe call me up again on the telephone. But I guess you noticed he ain't done that. Well, I guess you've got a whole flock of other people waiting to talk to you, so I'll close off, but if you could kind of give Charlie a Heavenly whomp and get him to at least let me know he's all right, I'd sure appreciate it. Amen.

SHE WANDERS AROUND IN HER DESPAIR FOR A MOMENT. THEN FRONT DOOR OPENS AND MARY LOOKS IN.

MARY

Loretta.

LORETTA

Hi, Mary.

MARY

Are you busy?

LORETTA

Heck, no. There ain't nothing I feel like doing in my forlorn condition.

MARY

Loretta, you have got to pull yourself together, Loretta. And there is a way. Which I learned from television. We can really learn a lot from television.

LORETTA

Mary, it's real Christian nice of you to wangle me up out of these depressions, but I ain't in no mood to watch no T.V. educationals like about farming in the Indonesias and making home decorations out of coat hangers and all like that.

MARY

I'm not talking about UHF. I'm talking about soap operas.

LORETTA

You want me to watch soap operas? All that sad-making stuff about people going blind and losing husbands and having operations?

MARY

What I'm saying is: why are soap operas so popular? Did you ever think about that? It's a very interesting question.

LORETTA

Well, I'm sure it is, Mary...

MARY

And the answer is because they make a person feel better by watching people who are even more depressed than you are.

LORETTA

But they're just make-believe TV type
people.

MARY

Loretta, there is more genuine heartache
on television and you know what this
block is like.

LORETTA

No, I don't. I thought it was a typical
nice block.

MARY

A typical nice block. With my mother
in it? Dressed up like a hooker?

LORETTA

Mary, why didn't you tell me? I mean,
I knew it was rough and all, since your
Daddy got took...

MARY

No, you don't understand. She's supposed
to be a decoy, and she could probably get
shot.

LORETTA

Well, my gracious-goodness me!

MARY

Not to mention the fact that there's a
bi-sexual living in a trailer in her
driveway.

(MORE)

MARY (CONT'D)

Loretta, I cannot tell you how distracting it is to look into your own mother's driveway and see a trailer with a bisexual in it. Especially when your husband is in that business. The trailer business... not the bisexual business. Then, of course, there's Cathy.

LORETTA

You're not gonna tell me Cathy's living in a trailer with a bisexual?

MARY

Oh, no -- she'd have to go through every man on earth before she'd try a trailer. But that is exactly her problem. I mean, not only is she about to sell a baby she hasn't even had. Walking around with her stomach protruding with a 'for sale' sign on it. But to top off everything else, she and the married man who's buying her baby for his father-in-law, are in love.

LORETTA

That is fierce complicated trouble, Mary.

MARY

But not nearly as bad as what I've saved for last, which is so depressing I almost can't say it. But I will.

LORETTA

What? What?

MARY

Pat Gimble is a battered wife. Pat
Gimble is bruised and confused, because
her husband, Garth, batters her.

LORETTA

You mean, wishy-washy, ol' mild-eye
Garth?

MARY

I know, doesn't he look like Richard
Widmark? Of course, look at what he did
in all his early films. Which is exactly
my point. If you become involved with
Helen's problems on any soap-opera --
there's always a Helen -- you will forget
about your own, at least until it's time
to see Dr. Gilroy.

LORETTA

Who?

MARY

Dr. Alan Dilroy, who used to work at the
plant, and did me absolutely no good at
all. But now he's in private practice,
and, of course, you haven't given anyone
V.D. or had sex in a hospital bed with a
cardiac patient.

LORETTA

Well, I don't know, Mary. I mean about a man like your Doctor Gilroy. I know I would never have V.D. or sex with a cardiac patient.

MARY

Trust me. And if it doesn't work, just think of him as someone insistent from "The Watchtower". (SHE GOES)

QUICK FADE.

SCENE 2

HAGGERS' LIVING ROOM, THAT AFTERNOON

LORETTA WITH GILROY.

GILROY

Normally, I don't make house calls,
Mrs. Haggars.

LORETTA

Well, I should think not. You can't even hardly get real hurt. I mean, you know, somethin' physical.

GILROY

It's just that when Mrs. Hartman called me... you see, I've felt somewhat guilty about the Hartmans...

LORETTA

You have? You mean, you done somethin' bad to 'em?

GILROY

Well, let's just say I lost my professional distance dealing with both Tom and Mary.

LORETTA

You mean you're office is on the other side of town?

GILROY

I mean I let my own feelings get in the way of helping them deal with their problems. But I've learned from that that... you know, even psychologists are human...

LORETTA

No, I didn't know that.

GILROY

And I think that now I have the objectivity not only to help, but to listen.

LORETTA

Ain't that backward.

GILROY

So feel free to go ahead and tell me what's on your mind.

LORETTA

Well, you see, I'm depressed and I'm lonely on account of my husband.

GILROY

You don't like your husband?

LORETTA

Oh, no! I love him. He used to work at the plant. But he got this injury.

GILROY

I used to work at the plant.

LORETTA

Yeah, I know... Mary told me.

GILROY

Was it some sort of industrial accident?

LORETTA

No, it's much more terrible. And shameful.

What I mean is: it would like to curl your hair. And I don't hardly know you.

GILROY

I'm an objective professional, Mrs. Haggers. I don't make moral judgments. And having heard just about everything there is to hear about human behavior, I promise you I won't be shocked. So you just go ahead and tell me what happened. I'm sure we can work things out and you'll feel a whole lot better.

LORETTA

Oh, that would be powerful nice on account of the present condition of my mind is like to drive me out of my everlovin'!

GILROY

I'm sure you'll keep your very pretty
head in perfectly fine fettle.

LORETTA

Well, you see, the thing is, although I
got this real fierce love for my husband,
I kinda got involved in a sexual way
with this other man. I hope I ain't
shocking you bad.

GILROY

Of course not, Mrs. Hagers. A lot of
people are torn by sexual infidelity.

LORETTA

Not that I was actual involved in any
carnal transgressions, you understand.
But what I guess it was was that I was
kind of leading this man on without
realizing what my attractive young body
was doing to his very easily warped mind.

GILROY

I understand.

LORETTA

So, what finally happened... I'll leave
out all the lustin' and cryin' part...
was Charlie found out I was at a motel
room with this man... I won't mention
his name, on account of you might be
votin' for him... and he came wham-boom
rushing over with a shotgun.

GILROY

He's jealous by nature?

LORETTA

Oh, no... not too bad. He was just
protectin' my firm young flesh on
accounta I was gonna be raped.

GILROY

I see.

LORETTA

But I grabbed the gun so he wouldn't
get hisself on no first degree type
murder charge, and in the whole hullabaloo,
Charlie was the one what got shot! And
it was a fierce awful wound for a man
of Charlie's character.

GILROY

Where was he shot, Mrs. Hagers?

LORETTA

Well, this is the most shocking part
of the story, Dr. Gilroy.

GILROY

He's blind.

LORETTA

Oh, no!

GILROY

He'll never walk again...

LORETTA

Oh, no... he's walkin' around just fine.

GILROY

Mrs. Haggers, I'm a doctor. You can tell me whatever it is. I cannot be shocked.

LORETTA

Well, I'll just say what Charlie said, which is he got shot in the one place any man would rather get shot any place else than.

GILROY

You mean...?

LORETTA

That is precise and exact what I mean.

GILROY

Well... you can't mean shot 'off'.

LORETTA

Well, just half off. Which means he's still got one left.

GILROY

Are you saying that your husband lost a testicle because you were in a motel room with another man?

LORETTA

Gettin' raped. I mean, I thought it was just this religious-musical interest he had in my soul, you know.

GILROY

Mrs. Haggers, I have heard of women who've caused their husbands to lose their jobs.

(MORE)

GILROY (CONT'D)

And women who've caused their husbands
to lose their friends. But a woman who
causes her husband to lose a testicle!
In a motel room. This is simply the most
appalling, most disgusting... I mean, I'm
not squeamish because of fears of my own
masculinity, although I do have these
dreams, but there is a limit. I mean, I
should have known better. After all,

ACT THREECAPRI LOUNGE, EARLY EVENING

BUSINESS IS SLOW. BARTENDER, THROUGH THIS SCENE, IS BUSY GETTING READY FOR THE NIGHT'S TRADE, FUNNELING CHEAP BOOZE INTO EXPENSIVE BRAND BOTTLES, WATERING THE BOOZE, TAKING CHERRIES OUT OF USED GLASSES AND PUTTING THEM BACK IN THEIR ORIGINAL BOTTLES. MARTHA, IN HER HOOKER GETUP, COMES IN AND SASHAYS UP TO THE BAR.

MARTHA

Hiya, Big Boy.

BARTENDER

Oh, oh... you back again?

MARTHA

Yeah... just looking for a little action.

If you know what I mean, Big Boy.

BARTENDER

Lady, are you working for the fuzz?

MARTHA

You mean the prostitution ring?

BARTENDER

No, I mean the fuzz, the police, el
heato-o.

MARTHA

Now what makes you think I'm working for
the police?

BARTENDER

Because I know how to spot 'em... and
all you do is come in here and ask
questions about prostitution.

MARTHA

Well, it's a topic of conversation on
everybody's mind, isn't it?

BARTENDER

Not mine.

MARTHA

And it's more interesting than the
weather. Why don't you tell me about
it?

BARTENDER

Because I never heard of it. And, besides,
we don't like police plants around here...
if you get my meaning!

MARTHA

Well, personally, I just adore plants,
philodendrons... but if you don't want
me to be a friendly nice ol' girl who's
willin'...

ANOTHER ANGLE

TOM COMES IN, DOES NOT SEE MARTHA,
SEES GARTH SITTING ALONE AT A
TABLE, STARING MOODILY INTO A
DRINK. TOM APPROACHES HIM.

TOM

Hi, Garth, mind if I sit down?

GARTH

What? Oh, hi. No, Tom, go ahead.

TOM

Guess I'm not exactly the first person
you expected to see here.

GARTH

No, I guess not. At least not after the
other night.

TOM

Well, I'm in the Optimists now. One of
the guys I know from the Jaycees
sponsored me. And I got to thinkin'
about the rough luck you've been havin'
and I thought I'd track you down. You
don't mind?

GARTH

No, just a little surprised is all.

(HALF BEAT) I'm sorry about what I said
about your place.

TOM

Me, too. So we'll both forget it, okay?

GARTH

Deal. (THEY SHAKE)

TOM

Also, not that I think it was Mary's
fault, but I'm sorry you lost your job
with Merle. I know she didn't mean to
cause you any trouble.

GARTH

(A SHRUG) I guess that's the breaks.
Can't hold it against a volunteer
consumer-housewife.

TOM

Glad to hear you put it that way. That's
optimistic.

GARTH

Who I'm holding it against is Merle
Jeeter. I got him to where he is, and
I'm out on my ear, which is not the
American way as I see it.

TOM

It's rough, Garth. Really rough.

GARTH

So you go home and tell your wife... but
you know something? Women have no idea
just how rough it is out in the real
world. Take Pat, for instance. She has
absolutely no conception of what kind of
pressure I'm under day after day. None.
Which is the kind of ignorance that
drives me up the wall. So is it any
wonder I have to get a little rough with
her every once in a while.

TOM

What do you mean, rough?

GARTH

You know, chop-chop, rough.

TOM

You mean, you hit her?

GARTH

If she has it coming... yeah.

TOM

A woman?

GARTH

Hell, they're the stronger sex...

everybody knows that. Besides, if you knew what it was like, you wouldn't be staring at me like that.

TOM

Look, man... I don't buy hitting a woman ever.

GARTH

Oh, well, I thought you'd understand... but forget it.

TOM

You know, you oughta see someone about a thing like that. Someone to talk to. I'd talk to you, but after what I just heard, I'm sorry I came down here.

GARTH

Yeah? Well, maybe I should talk it over with Merle Jeeter or someone like that. I'll bet he doesn't even shut down the prostitution in this town.

TOM

What prostitution?

GARTH

Are you kidding? They're all over the place. You can spot them a mile off.

There's one right over there at the bar.

TOM LOOKS AT THE BAR.

TOM

Holy hell... that's my mother-in-law.

My mother-in-law for Chrissakes.

FADE OUT.

END OF EPISODE #188